

U.S. Serial No. 10/689,537
Response to Office Action dated January 9, 2006

REMARKS

Applicants' attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for the courteous and helpful interview of April 11, 2006 during which the present amendment to the claims and the prior art were discussed.

Claim 1 is amended in order to more clearly define the claimed invention. It is believed that this response is fully responsive to the Office Action of January 9, 2006. The Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added.

The present invention is portable terminal device of the foldable type having a pair of flat cabinets openably connected to each other by a hinge mechanism. Each of the cabinets has a front cabinet half segment to be opposed to the other cabinet, when closed, and a rear cabinet half segment joined to the front cabinet half segment. The front cabinet half segment is a separate piece from the rear cabinet half segment. One of the pair of cabinets has the front cabinet half segment thereof connected at an end portion thereof to the hinge mechanism and has the rear cabinet half segment thereof engaged with the front cabinet half segment thereof. The other cabinet has the rear cabinet half segment thereof connected at an end portion thereof to the hinge mechanism and has the front cabinet half segment thereof engaged with the rear cabinet half segment thereof. When the pair of cabinets are closed, with extraneous matter between them, no clearance is created in the joint between the first cabinet half segment and the rear cabinet half segment of either of the pair of cabinets.

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Support for the present amendments to claim 1 may be found at page 12, lines 4-10 and page 15, line 11 through page 16, line 4.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Kobayashi (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0173281). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In the background of the invention portion of the present specification, the problem to be solved by the present invention is described as being the creation of a clearance between a front cabinet segment 60 and a rear cabinet segment 70 of a cabinet 20 (see Fig. 1), when cabinets 10 and 20 of the portable terminal, which are hinged to each other, are unintentionally closed with extraneous matter held between the two cabinets 10 and 20.

The present invention reduces such “creation of a clearance” by connecting respective portions of the hinge mechanism to a specific half cabinet segment of each cabinet (10 and 20).

The present invention is concerned with a portable terminal device of the type shown in a dismantled state in present Fig. 6. In Fig. 6, one cabinet is made up of a rear cabinet half segment 7 and a front cabinet half segment 6, the other cabinet is made up of front cabinet half segment 5 and rear cabinet half segment 4. In the device of Fig. 6, the hinge mechanism is attached to 7 (a rear cabinet half segment) and 5 (a front cabinet half segment). Present Claim 1 defines a portable terminal device having the cabinet segments as shown in Fig. 6.

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It is respectfully submitted that for a portable terminal device to anticipate or suggest the present invention, it must have similar type components (front and rear cabinet half segments) or else the presently claimed location for the hinge mechanism could not possibly be disclosed or suggested.

It is respectfully submitted that the portable terminal device of Kobayashi cannot possibly be relied on to teach the claimed arrangement, as front and rear cabinet half segments of hinged cabinets 11 and 12 are not shown or discussed. The drawings of Kobayashi show solely a single segment for each cabinet 11 and 12. Therefore, no conclusion can be drawn as to placement of a hinge mechanism on a certain half segment of a cabinet.

Additionally, even if *arguendo*, Kobayashi is said to inherently have front and rear cabinet segments in each cabinet 11 and 12, Figs. 2A - 2C and Fig. 8 of Kobayashi shows hinge portions that are located toward where front cabinet half segments would be located in the cabinets, if the cabinets would have front and rear cabinet half segments. Such an arrangement is the arrangement having the problem that the present invention solves.

In view of the present amendment to Claim 1 and the above remarks, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Kubo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,633,749). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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Kobayashi is discussed above. It is respectfully submitted that Kubo et al. does not show the features claimed in Claims 4 and 5.

The feature of Claim 4 is shown in Fig. 4 as circular arc piece 53 and partial member 41, forming a hollow cylinder, when combined.

The feature of Claim 5 is shown in Fig. 4 as circular arc piece 62 and partial member 73, forming a hollow cylinder, when combined.

In Kubo et al., referring to Fig. 3(a), hollow cylinders 31a, 31b, 32a, and 32 are of a single formed piece, and are not formed of two pieces, as presently claimed. Also, in Kubo et al., the partial cylindrical portions of 31 and 32 do not combine to form a hollow cylinder, as they are positioned side-by-side (see Fig. 1 (a)).

In view of the above remarks and Claims 4 and 5 depending from Claim 1, which is discussed above, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Kubo et al. and further in view of Frohlund et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,421,547). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Kobayashi and Kubo et al. are discussed above. It is respectfully submitted that Frohlund et al. does not show the feature of Claims 6 and 7, a helically wound flexible lead connecting a circuit board in the manipulation-side cabinet and a display in the display-side cabinet. In the device of Frohlund et

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al. the display 4 and the manipulation means 5 are both located in the same cabinet 2. Component 6 is described as being merely a "flip" or cover for the device, which also contains a microphone 7.

In view of above remarks and Claims 6 and 7 depending from Claim 1, which is discussed above, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It is believed that Claims 1-7, as amended, are patentable distinct and non-obvious in view of the cited references, and in condition for allowance. Allowance of Claims 1-7 is respectfully requested.

If there are any issues of a minor nature remaining, the Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' attorney, the undersigned, at Area Code (202) 659-2930.

In the event that any fees are due in connection with this paper, please charge our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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